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C O N F I D E N T I A L MILAN 1727

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINR, PINT, IT

SUBJECT: POLITICAL OUTLOOK SEEN BY MILAN DC LEADER GINO COLOMBO.

MEMCON GINO COLOMBO, REGIONAL ASSESSOR AND FORMER PRESIDENT REGIONAL ASSEMBLY WITH CONGEN, SEPT 19, 1975.

1. DC POLITICS. COLOMBO, RECENTLY RESIGNED DC MILAN CITY SECRETARY AND JUST RETURNED FROM DC ROME POW-WOW, SAW NEW PARTY LINE UP TAKING SHAPE. PRE-ELECTION FACTIONS ARE DEAD IN HIS VIEW. TWO NEW ALLIANCES IN THE MAKING. FORLANI IS ONE POLL BACKED BY BISAGLIA, ANDREOTTI AND, MARCARA (MILAN BOSS), TO WHICH GINO COLOMBO ADHERES. OPPOSING POLL HEADED BY MORO SUPPORTED BY ZACCAGNINI AND, RUMOR. EMILIO COLOMBO HAS SWING VOTE AND COULD JUMP EITHER WAY.

2. BASIC POLICY DIFFERENCE SHAPING UP IS ELECTION TACTICS. FORLANI GROUP LEANING TOWARD SNAP PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS WHILE MORO WANTS PLAY FOR TIME-IF POSSIBLE UNTIL 1977 DEADLINE.

3. FORLANI ANALYSIS IS THAT EACH PASSING DAY PCI CONSOLIDATES ITS HOLD ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND BUILDS PATRONAGE MACHINE THAT ENHANCES ITS ELECTION POWER. QUICK ELECTIONS WOULD BE A RISK THAT PCI LOCAL ELECTION TRIUMPH WOULD BE REPEATED NATIONALLY. BUT AGAINST THAT IS CERTAINTY THAT DC WILL LOSE LATER AND CHANCE THAT PUBLIC NOW SURPRISE

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AND DISMAYED BY HOW MUCH STRENGTH IT HANDED PCI ON JUNE 15 IN

DISGUST WITH DC WOULD SWING BACK AT LEAST IN PART TO DC.

4. NOT ONLY FORLANI WANTS QUICK ELECTIONS, BUT POSITION GAINING GROUND AMONG SOCIALISTS AS WELL. COLOMBO CLAIMS AUTONOMIST WING OF NENNI, MANCINI AND CRAXI REACHING SAME CONCLUSION. THEY DISCOVERING COMMUNISTS EVEN MORE DISAGREEABLE CAGE MATES THAN DC AND WANT TO TRY EXPLOIT PUBLIC SURPRISE AND FEAR OF PCI GAINS BEFORE IT TOO LATE.

5. COLOMBO FAVORS QUICK ELECTIONS ALTHOUGH HE ACKNOWLEDGES DC DEEPLY DIVIDED AND DEMORALIZED. BUT FACED WITH SUDDEN DEATH CHOICE, HE HOPES DC WOULD RALLY AND SNAP BACK. THE RISK IS TREMENDOUS BUT HESITATION TO STRIKE WHEN EVEN POOR ODDS ARE BEST IS RESIGNATION TO OBLIVION, HE ARGES.P

6. IN ANY EVENT, DC MUST REBUILD TIES WITH SOCIALISTS AND LAY PARTIES , OR WHAT REMAINS OF THEM. COLOMBO SEES NO FUTURE EXCEPT IN LAY CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY MORE PREPARED SHARE POWER WITH SOCIALISTS THAN BEFORE.

7. COMMUNIONE AND LIBERAZIONE IS IMPORTANT NEW CAPILLARY FORCECCORDIN G COLOMBO THAT CAN MAKE VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TO DC. WHILE ROLE IN PART Y TODAY MUST BE MINOR, IT COULD BE SOURCE OF NEW LEADERS SINCE PARTY YOUTH ORGANIZATION LITERALLY DEAD. DC SIMPLY HAS NO UNDER FORTY LEADERSHIP WAND C&L COULD BEGIN PROVIDE. PROBLEM WITH C&L, HOWEVER, IS FUNDAMENTALIST CATHOLIC PHILOSOPHY WHICHIS UNPALATABLE TO MOST PRESENT AND PROSPECTIVE DC VOTERS

8. NEW DAILY REPUBBLICA (MILANS 1713) A WILD IDEA, ACCORDING TO COLOMBO. THERE IS NO POLITICAL SPACE FOR SUCH A PAPER AND HE CAN'T IMAGINE RATIONALE FOR ITS PUBLICATION. COLOMBO DOUBTED CORRIERE OR ENI'S GIORNO WOULD FOLD NO MATTER WHAT THEIR LOSSES. NEW PRESS LAW, CONSIDERATELY UNDER REPORTED BY PRESS, PROVIDES SUBSIDY FOR ALL PAPERS BASED ON CIRCULATION IN GUISE NEWSPRINT SUBSIDY. IN CRUNCH,H GOVERNMENT WOULD BAIL OUT FAILING PRESS AS IT BAILS OUT ANYOTHER FAILING ENTERPRIZE WITH POLITICAL CLOUT.

9. COLOMBO THOUGHT AMB VOLPES EPOCA STATEMENT EXACTLY ON MARK AND CONFIDENTIAL

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MOST TIMELY. THE MESSAGE HAD BEEN GOTTEN ACROSS. MOST IMPORTANT POINT WAS LINK TO INTERNATIONAL SITUATION. PCI ALWAYS INSISTS THAT ITS ACCESSION TO POWER IN ITALY WOULD CHANGE NOTHING INTERNATIONALLY. VOLPE STATEMENT GOES TO HEART OF ISSUE BY CHALLENGING THIS KEY ASSUMPTION. LAST THING ITALIAN PUBLIC, INCLUDING COMMUNISTS VOTERS, WANTS IS TO BE SWALLOWED IN SOVBLOC. AMBASSADOR'S WARNING OF THIS DANGER HIT PCI WHERE IT HURTS AND THAT EVIDENT IN NATURE OF PCI REBUTTALS.

10. COLOMBO TOOK MUCH COMFORT IN OUR VIEW OF TURN AROUND IN REST OF
MED BASIN IN PORTUGUAL, ISRAEL-EGYPT, GREECE AND PROGRESS WITH TURKEY

.
HE DESCRIBED MID-EAST SETTLEMENT AS MAJOR STEP TO RE-ESTABLISHING
US CREDIBILITY AND DISSEPARATING POST WATERGATE/VIETNAM SPECTRE OF
US ISOLATIONISM.FINA

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